

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:7430  
ANSWERED ON:15.05.2002  
MACHINE WRITTEN PASSPORTS  
AMBATI BRAHMANAIAH

**Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

- (a) the number of passport offices in the country issuing machine-written and machine `readable` passports;
- (b) the number of passport offices in which the Government propose to introduce the same during 2002-2003; and
- (c) the benefits of machine-written passports?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH)

- (a) At present machine readable passports are being issued in 6 passport offices and work is in progress on issuing machine readable passports from 8 other passport offices;
- (b) All major passport offices;
- (c) Machine written and readable passports are a norm recommended by International Civil Aviation Organisation(ICAO). Most of the advanced countries today issue such passports. Machine written passports eliminate errors in filling personal particulars of the holder, make the passport visually more presentable and would markedly reduce forgeries. Machine readable passports would cut down the time taken for clearances at immigration counters.